The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

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The Old Home.

The roof tree stands as ever it stood, the jasmine stars the wall,
The great westeria's purple blooms o'er dark grey gables fall,
The roses that our mother loved, blush 'neath her window sill,
And the clematis our father trained droops, as he taught it, still.

The August sunset lights the panes, where we were wont to watch,
Its rays of crimson and of gold on baby brows to catch,
On the wall where your first nest we found, the grand old ivy waves,
As when we chose a shoot to plant upon our sacred graves.

The thrushes that we paused to hear are dead long summers gone,
Yet the sweet rose thicket echoes now to the self-same ringing tone,
The flowers a fuller glory show, and the trees a deepened shade,
Naught else on Nature's face is changed, since here of yore we played.

Naught else on Nature's face. Oh, life, can ever seasons pass
And leave our hearts renewed as fair and bright as meadow grass!
Death's icy shadow rests for us, on the home that once was ours,
We see through tears the bairns that sport among our childhood's flowers.

The stranger's shadow flits across our old familiar floors,
The stranger's footstep as of right seeks our old open doors,
With a dim sense of loss and wrong, like one from death returned,
We look on all for which for years our faithful fondness yearned.

Better to keep the fancy sketch of all it used to be,
Better than blurring by the truth the hues of memory!
Oh earth has no abiding place, but the mighty word is given,
No cloud, or care, or change will vex the countless homes of Heaven!

The Golden Rule.

BY THE REV. FRANK WALTERS.

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.—MATTHEW vii., 12.

Some people are greatly surprised when told that the Golden Rule was uttered by prophets and philosophers before the time of Christ. If they could, they would confine truth within the boards of the Bible, and degrade humanity in order to invest Jesus with a monopoly of goodness. Now, we hold that truth is just as precious from the lips of a little child as from the lips of the great philosopher. The only authority of a doctrine is its truth; the trumpet of an archangel cannot make it truer; the stammering tongue of childhood cannot take from its validity. Jesus gave no special authority to the words he spoke; it was the truth of his words which invested him with spiritual power. I care not where it comes from, so that the doctrine is true; I ask not about its origin, so that it commends itself to my reason. I think we ought to rejoice that this great ethical maxim was spoken by other masters as well as by Jesus, and was taught in lands outside Palestine. If I go to a foreign country, I am glad to find some familiar English flower growing in its soil; I do not murmur that my fatherland has no monopoly of its beauty; nor is the flower less precious because it finds a home in many regions. So, it deepens my sense of the *humanity* that was in Christ when I find him uttering those intuitions which have been growing through the long experience of the race. If this Golden Rule was

merely the teaching of a single philosopher, who, after long inquiry, came forth from his study to proclaim it to mankind, then we might be doubtful about its value, saying: 'This man, who has lived so much in retirement, who knows so little of the wear and tear of daily life and the practical concerns of the great world of men, is not the best judge of the principles that ought to guide human actions. This is merely *his opinion*, his own private interpretation; and we may fairly hesitate before we commit ourselves to his advice as an ultimate authority.' But the antiquity and universality of this moral code at once command our reverent attention. When we find it written in all the Bibles of the world; fossilised into the proverbs of every nation; when there is scarcely a thinker in any age who does not utter it in some form or other; when it comes to us, not only from the lips of Jesus, but from the Old Testament and the Talmud; when Confucius speaks it from China, Thales from Greece, Buddha from India, and Cicero from Rome; then we are forced to regard it as the very voice of *Humanity* proclaiming the deepest law of its own moral life, the law which is *absolute*, because inevitable in the constitution of the race. This Golden Rule is an excellent example of an intuition, not as a supernatural endowment, but as an element involved in every stage of social development. As soon as men began to live together in tribes and clans, the need of such a law as this would be impressed upon their minds every day and every hour; until, after the education of ages, men now accept the Golden Rule without question or argument; the Transcendentalist acknowledges its value, and the Utilitarian employs it as the best summary of his practical code of morals.

If you reflect at all in the smallest degree upon the nature of human society, you will at once see that such a law as this is to society what gravitation is to the solar system. If society is to become beautiful in form and order as the course of nature, it likewise must have its rule, its supreme law, the violation of which involves the destruction of the social organism. If men lived alone and never touched one another; if there were none of those subtile organic filaments linking soul to soul, making hearts throb in unison and minds work in sympathy; if we were a multitude of shifting atoms owning no relationship to one another; then, indeed, we should need no law but that of impulse and personal desire. But, since, by our deepest nature, we are social beings, identified with the life of the world, it is essential that we should recognise and obey that law which makes of human kind one brotherhood.

The beauty of the Golden Rule is that it is thoroughly practical. It is capable, indeed, in its ultimate application, of leading men to the noblest heroism; but it, at first, deals with men where they are, and appeals to their immediate experience. It says: *How do you like to be treated? then treat others so;* and in this way it lays the first foundation-stone upon which to build the temple of a perfected humanity. The French philosopher objected to the Golden Rule that it appealed to far too low a motive, and tended to make selfishness the principle of our actions. 'Whatsover *ye* would that men should do to *you*'—but why refer to self at all?—we ought to forget self entirely, and think and work solely for the sake of others. You have no *rights*, said Comte, you have only *duties;* you have nothing owing to you, but you have immense debts which you must spend your life in discharging. But this extravagant criticism helps to bring out the beauty and balance and practical truth of the Golden Rule. If no one had any rights, then no one could have any duties; if no one had anything owing him, then no one could have any debts to pay. Humanity has no existence apart from the individuals of which it is composed; and unless the individual is cultured and cared for, humanity suffers loss. Hence, the Golden Rule begins with the individual, and then regards the individual as related to others. There is no virtue apart from virtuous persons; virtue can only exist as a quality of individual men and women. I can only judge of the wants and feelings of others by first experiencing my own; I can only understand the sacredness of the personality over against me by realising the value of the personality which constitutes me. There must, then, not only be broad sympathies; but as the very backbone of the social fabric, there must also be a strong individualism and a certain self-assertiveness. This wonderful being I call *myself*—why should I blaspheme or crush it? is it not also the offspring of divinity and the child of eternity?

This inalienable self, within whose conditions I am fast bound, unable for a moment to change it for the self-hood of another—this mysterious consciousness through which alone can come to me any knowledge of nature, any love of man, any thought of God—has not this a sanctity and awfulness regarded as the spring of action, the source of mortality, and the judgment seat of Law? The vagrant stream which overflows its banks, and will not keep its channel, is wasted and lost before it reaches its destiny in the ocean, it loses its beauty, dissipates its power, and destroys its permanent utility. And even so, our personality is the channel through which divine influences flow to bless the great ocean of human life; but if we respect not its integrity, if we dissipate our powers in gushing sentiment and unregulated philanthrophy, the vocation of our life can never be fulfilled.

And, besides, society exists for the welfare of individuals, and the man who respects the sanctity of his own person will the most deeply regard the rights of others; his own person will become the *symbol* of the individuality of every member of the commonwealth, and from his own experience he will learn how to regulate his actions in relation to those around him. It is only from my own experience that I know how to treat others; and so the Golden Rule most wisely makes its first appeal to *humanity as embodied in the individual.* It is only by learning how the unkind word rankles in my own breast that I learn to check my own hasty lips. There is a deep pathos in those words—'Touched with the feeling of our infirmity.' It is only by being *touched* with the feeling of infirmity that I am prompted to raise the fallen and comfort the sorrowful. It is only by having experienced the healing power of forgiveness that I am led to speak the word of pardon, instead of crushing the penitent under the burden of condemnation. The Golden Rule seems to say, 'Oh man, these human beings who crowd around thee are of like nature to thyself. Thou hast felt and suffered, and sinned; thou hast wept, and laughed, and groaned, and prayed. Think of thyself when thou art dealing with them, and act as thou wouldst have them do to thee.'

'As ye would that men should do unto you do ye even so to them.' The whole doctrine is wrapped up in a single word—SYMPATHY. Sympathy is often used merely to express pity *for* another, and so is generally confined to a superficial emotion. But the word, as De Quincey reminds us, really means 'the act of reproducing in our own minds the feeling of another, whether for hatred, indignation, love, pity, or approbation.'* Sympathy means *fellow-feeling*, and is often expressed in the familiar advice, 'Put yourself in his place.' And I am quite sure there is nothing we need more in our families and our social life than this power of sympathy, this personal realization of the conditions of others. It is quite possible that someone is living in the same house with you who is yet dwelling in a different world from your own. Your wife, your child, your servant—you see these move about you, you observe their routine of duty, you gladly receive services from their hands; but never for one moment have you realised their feelings and fears, their sorrows and disappointments, their need of help, their longing for one word of human kindness. You must not only think of what you would that men should do to you *in your own present condition;* but, by the power of sympathy, you must learn to put yourself in the place of other people, and thus learn the great social duties you owe to every man and woman and child with whom you come into contact. Too often we erect self into a barrier which hides from us the broad horizon of human life. We do not live great human lives, but small, narrow, selfish lives. How many people fence themselves in from all common interests, and consider alone what tends to their own pleasure, comfort, and gain. By our selfish pride we too often cut ourselves off from the sources of deepest joy. Two friends will live alienated from each other, each longing for a renewal of fellowship, and yet unable to break down the foolish misunderstanding which divides them; neither will exercise the sympathy which would at once bind them together; neither can bring himself to speak the *human word* which would at once fuse their personalities into one great love. In this way the most terrible tragedies are created by our own selfishness and pride. Oh, to say the word my pride refused, to give the

* On the Knocking at the Gate in '*Macbeth*,' (note): where the Author also remarks that 'instead of saying "sympathy *with* another," many writers adopt the monstrous barbarism of "sympathy *for* another."'

kiss to that pleading face upturned to mine, to grasp the hand I cast away in anger, to utter, to show all the love that now I feel, when the one that hungered for that love is gone for ever! These are the sorrows deeper than death, bitterer than bereavement. Life is short and *we cannot spare time for quarrels and misunderstandings.* Life has tragedies dark and terrible enough for us all without creating tragedies by our pride; sooner or later each one of us must drink a cup bitter enough with sorrow without adding the gall of remorse. As you have felt the rankling sharpness of resentment, send not the poisoned dart into another breast: as you know the blessedness of pardon, speak the free word of forgiveness to the penitent at your feet. Remember that 'To UNDERSTAND IS TO PARDON;' that to sympathise with others is to deepen, enrich, and glorify life, making it the fulfilment of the Golden Rule—'As ye would that men should do unto you do ye even so to them.'

Three Parables from John Ruskin.

I.

A PARABLE OF IRON.

In his little book called "Two Paths," Ruskin has a lecture on "The place of Iron in Nature, Art, and Poetry." In the first part of this lecture he points out the important part played by iron in contributing to the beauty of the natural world. Living as we do in a great iron district* we are accustomed to think of this metal as a source of wealth and power, but decidedly, not of beauty. It has turned the once picturesque landscape of our Midlands into a scene of deformity and ugliness; hideous chimneys, smouldering slag heaps, black belching smoke, grimy roads, sickly grass, wilted trees, foul canals, all these we know as the result of iron and its manufacture. If we think of iron as beautiful at all it is when we see in our Art Gallery the fine specimens of ironwork—scrolls, gates, lamps, collected by Mr. Wallis in Italy, or when we see it shining and polished in knives, swords, and scissors. But whether ugly or beautiful all this is not iron in its best uses. The real and highest use of iron, Mr. Ruskins tells us, is to turn into rust! When you see rusty iron you generally think of it as spoiled iron; and for most of *our* uses it commonly is so. And because we cannot use a rusty knife or razor as well as a polished one we suppose it to be a great defect in iron that it is subject to rust. "On the contrary, the most perfect and useful part of iron is its rust; and therefore it is endowed with so ready a disposition to get itself into that condition. Nothing rusts so easily as iron. In a certain sense and almost literal one, we may say that iron rusted is Living, and that iron polished is Dead. You all, probably, know that in the mixed air we breathe, the part of it essentially useful to us is called oxygen; and that this is to all minds, in the most accurate sense of the word, 'The breath of life.' Now, it is this very same air the iron breathes when it gets rusty. It takes the oxygen from the atmosphere as freely as we do, though it uses it differently. The iron keeps it: we part with it again. The iron takes the oxygen and the oxygen working on the iron produces rust, and rust is iron and oxygen mixed in due proportions. And the main service of iron is not to give us knives, swords, pens, and pins, but to become rusted and pass into the ground we feed from and into nearly all the substances needful to our existence. Sand, lime, clay, soda, potash and so forth are all formed from the rust of various metals; and in this form they render the best of all service to man. There is only one metal that does not rust readily, and that is gold. And gold is the metal that, in its influence on man, has caused Death rather than Life."

It is not, however, of that part of Mr. Ruskin's lecture on iron and its rust as ministering to the necessities and utilities of life I wish to dwell, as upon his account of the place of iron rust in ministering to the beauty of the natural world. We are accustomed to think of iron as the emblem of hardship and hardness, and we are not wrong if we remember that hardship and hardness are fruitful sources of grace and loveliness. Iron enters into the corn and grass of the fields as part of their vitality, and is taken up into the veins of man in what he eats and drinks. There is iron in a cup of water; there is iron in a glass of claret; there is iron in a loaf of bread. Yet it is not of iron in these respects I would speak, but of iron as the source

* Spoken in Birmingham.

of nearly all beauty in the colours of the landscape or of precious stones. To quote Mr. Ruskin again:—"You know if water in which there is much iron passes over marble or stones it stains them a lovely brown or amber, the colour which delights your eye in a Welsh stream. But iron stains the great earth wherever you can see it; far and wide it is the colouring substance appointed to colour the globe for the sight of man. In winter you have seen hills covered with snow, and perhaps have enjoyed, at first, the contrast of their fair white with the dark blocks of pine woods; but have you ever considered how you would like them always white—not pure white, but dirty white, the white of thaw with all the chill of the snow in it, but none of its brightness? That is what the colour of the earth would be without its iron; that would be its colour everywhere. Follow out the idea till you get it in some detail. Think of your gravel walks in your garden all suddenly turned to the colour of ashes. That is what they would be without iron ochre. Pass into the country and pause at the first ploughed field you see sweeping up the hillsides in the sun, with its deep red furrows, and wealth of ridges all aglow, heaved aside by the ploughshare, like deep folds of russet velvet,—fancy it all changed into whitey-brown furrows, grisly, ashy. That is what it would be without iron. Pass on, in fancy, over hill and dale, till you reach the bounding line of the sea-shore: go down upon its breezy beach; watch the white foam flashing among the amber of it, and all the blue sea embayed in belts of golden sands, and then fancy all these golden sands turned into grey slime, the fairies no more able to call to each other 'Come unto these yellow sands,' but only 'Come unto these drab sands.' That is what they would be without iron."

"Iron is, therefore, in some sort the sunshine and light of landscape, but it is more than that. How much is added to the beauty of a landscape by the red-tiled cottages and red-bricked mansions that peep up among the trees, with their warm rich roofs. And what do you suppose dyes your tiles of cottage roofs? You don't paint them. It is Nature who puts all that lovely vermilion into the clay for you, and all that lovely vermilion is oxide of iron. Think, therefore, what your villages and towns would become, if, instead of that warm, rich red, the bricks and the tiles become pepper and salt colour—the colour of a street gutter in rainy weather. That is what they would be without iron."

"Did you ever think of what a bit of agate or coloured marble was painted? All these beautiful violet veinings and variegations of the marbles of Sicily and Spain, the glowing orange and amber colours of those of Sienna, the blood colour of all the precious jaspers that enrich the churches of Italy, and finally all the transitions of tint in the pebbles of Scotland,—all these are painted by Nature with this one material only, variously proportioned and applied, oxide of iron. The colour which gives the rosy flush to all the granite of Egypt, as it gives the flush to the rosiest summits of the alps is still oxide of iron."

Which things are a parable. Is it not strange to find this stern and strong metal mingled so delicately in creation that half the beauty of the world is owing to it? In the same way true beauty of human life, all the beautiful features of character, kindness, pity, sympathy, justice, mercy, patience, magnaminity—all that is lovely in soul and action, is born of stern hardship and difficulty: it is because the iron has entered into the soul that the soul puts on its features of grace and its hues of heaven. The burdens and trials men are called to endure—the soul "bound in affliction and iron"—are exactly those things without which character would be dull and ashy, without attractiveness or beauty. Find a man who has been much buffeted about the world and you will find one who is supremely interesting: if he be a right sort of man at all he cannot have suffered without suffering having wrought on his character to add to its fairness. I suppose that in so far as we have influence with our fellows, and that influence tells for truth and grace, for the right and beautiful, we have acquired it in the main from the iron of life, *i.e.*, the things we have suffered, and by which the crudeness and harshness of our characters have been mellowed, and from which we have learned a larger patience, a higher wisdom, a wider charity. That hard thing entering into our soul has melted by the action of heavens oxygen upon it into colours of eternal loveliness.

Most men are cradled into poetry by wrong;
They learn in suffering what they teach in song.

And this is just as true of piety as it is of poetry. If you discover in an author or preacher, for example, some noticeable access of spiritual power, if you find his words answering much more closely to your deepest inward experience and exerting a happier and more potent influence upon you, you may pretty certainly conclude that this new power has cost him dear; that it has come to him through conflicts, burdens, griefs, of which you have known nothing except through their invigorating and refining effect on his work. Or if, as you talk with some new friend, you become aware of a pure and noble nature, a kindly spirit, a lofty way of looking at things, an inexhaustible patience, charitable in its judgments, hopeful in its outlook, you will run but little risk in thinking that all these gracious things had their roots in grievous things. The loveliness of a human life is very largely the fruit of its hardships and difficulties. The iron has entered into the soul and come out again in tints and hues of beauty. Trouble, anxiety, bereavement, disappointment, affliction, all these are like the oxide of iron,—they sink into the nature and re-appear in mercy, pity, peace, and love.

JOSEPH WOOD.

Historic Notes on Midland Churches.

No. IX. Part III.

WHITCHURCH—THE PRESBYTERIAN CHAPEL.

The Rev. Edmund Butcher, who made an excursion from Sidmouth to Chester in the summer of 1803, passed through Whitchurch; and he tells us that "the original meeting-house was destroyed in the High-church riots in the reign of Queen Anne, and the present one, built by government, in its room." This is the building which still remains. At the time of Mr. Butcher's visit it was "remarkable for having over many of the pews brass plates, containing the names of persons and families who are buried there."

Four of these very fine and valuable memorial brasses, which were removed from the chapel when it ceased to be used for divine worship in 1844, and from that date until this year were stowed away and forgotten in a granary at Broad-Oak, have now been discovered, and handed over to the custody of the minister of the Church of the Saviour, Whitchurch, and have been placed on the interior of the north wall of the church, with an inscription noting their pedigree and changes. The largest of the four, surmounted by his crest and coat of arms commemorates SAMUEL YATE BENYON, of Ash, who died on 31st March, 1822, being "one of his Majesty's Counsel, a bencher of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn; Vice-chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Attorney-general, and Recorder of Chester." A biographical notice of this "steady friend to the civil and religious rights of his countrymen" will be found in the *Monthly Repository*, of 1822, p. 377. Two of the other brasses are to the memory of his wives, and the third to his mother—all of them are charged with correct coats of arms, and are in perfect preservation.

Ebenezer Keay was succeeded by one Rev. John Jones in 1780. He removed very soon to Devizes, and from there to Chudleigh in Devon, where he signs the baptismal register twice, once on 31st August, 1783, and again on 14th February 1786. Respecting him little that is reliable can now be found. There was a student of that name at the Presbyterian College, Caermarthen, from 1772 to 1776, hailing from Cefnarthen in those parts. He settled at Newcastle in Staffordshire whence he may have come to Whitchurch. There was one John Jones at Chudleigh during 1779—1792. Thomas Jenkins, in his account in the register, says of Jones that he removed from Devizes to Chudleigh, "where he may be now in 1805 for anything I know."

Next comes the Rev. Thomas Rees "who, after a very short residence at Whitchurch, removed to Elland, near Halifax in Yorks, but since went to America." Save for this referenee by Jenkins we know nothing else reliable about Rees. There was a Caermarthen student of this name "from Newport" during 1770—74, who settled at Newtown, Montgomeryshire, on leaving college. There was a minister of the same name at Chertsey in 1776, at Aylesbury in 1776, and Sherburne in 1777. It is quite within reason and probability that these references are all to one man. Neither Jones nor Rees signed the Dodington registers.

The next minister was Henry Procter, who

also remained but a short while, removing to Oat Street Chapel, Evesham, in 1783. He was the son of a minister of the same name—was born 1733, and educated first at Northampton (1751), afterwards entering the academy at Daventry in 1752. Prior to coming to Whitchurch he had ministered at Witney and at Stamford. He was minister at Evesham till 1788, and at Stafford and Stone from 1789 until his death in 1808.

The ministry of Thomas Jenkins, to whose memoranda and care we owe much in these articles, began in 1782 (he first signs the register on 4th January, 1783), and continued until his death on Saturday, the 29th July, 1815, in the 70th year of his age. His biographer in the *Monthly Repository* of August, 1815, says: "Though he was educated Calvinist, and professed that system as long as he could believe it; he never, in his most orthodox days, was afraid to converse with those who were called heretics, but regarded men according to their moral conduct." During his period as assistant master at Mr. Foot's classical school he "began to think that heresy might possibly be the truth. In consequence, he did not fly to human compositions to examine how the matter stood, but betook himself to his Bible, which he carefully read over, until he was fully convinced that there is only One Living and True God, even the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In this state of mind" we still quote his biographer "he came to Whitchurch where the discerning few rightly appreciated his doctrines, whilst the slaves to old systems gradually absented themselves from his place of worship. Their departure, with their withdrawing their subscriptions, had not the least effect upon his conduct. He continued to pursue and to preach the truth as he thought it to be declared in the gospel, and manifested himself always to be the friend of man, an associate with all the sociable, and a true disciple of the Prince of Peace." In 1798 there was a secession of that portion of the congregation which differed from the teachings of Mr. Jenkins and the doctrines he held. The seceders built a chapel close by their old home, thus starting the present flourishing Independent congregation, the list of ministers of which, with their dates is given in the appendix to the writer's *Whitchurch of long ago*, published last year.

Nothing daunted by this withdrawal of members, those who remained put renewed vigour into all the affairs of their society, fresh worshippers came in, and until about a year before his death, when he lost his sight and was at the same time struck with lameness, Jenkins preached to a large and influential congregation.

Jenkins was succeeded by a "thorough Unitarian," David William Jones, who called himself half a Welshman, and spoke of Preston [Presteign?], on the borders of Wales, as his home. He was at the Presbyterian College, Caermarthen, from 1799 till 1803. From 1804 to 1815 he was minister of the Hospital Street Chapel, Nantwich, the scene also of the ministry of the celebrated Dr. Joseph Priestley, from 1758—1761. Jones first signs the Dodington register on Christmas Day, 1815; his last entry being dated 5th July, 1818. Shortly afterwards he removed to Boston, in Lincolnshire, where he laboured both as minister and schoolmaster until 1826, when, having married and being then about 47 years of age, he emigrated to America, and was schoolmaster at Newport, near Carolina, until his death in 1835. He was a man of good parts and striking physique.

GEORGE EYRE EVANS,
Whitchurch, in Salop.

(*To be continued.*)

A String of Seed Pearls.

It makes all the difference to our view of God whether our first thought of Him is as a Giver or an Exactor.

God comes Bestowing before He comes Requiring.

What is really failing is not Christianity itself but certain organised forms it has been wearing — creed forms, sectarian forms now shattered and rent, or only remaining among us as survivals of ignorance and intolerance.

Many Theologians seem more anxious to make out a case against mankind than to assert and vindicate the love of God.

It is with human character often as it is with a torch: the more it is shaken the more it shines.

Micromega.

[Translated from Voltaire.]

PART II.

The Saturnian, now convinced that the earth was inhabited, concluded at once that it must be peopled with whales, and began to speculate on their origin, and to wonder if they had ideas and free will. Micromega examined the atom with great care, but was unable to pronounce whether it had a soul or not. They were both inclined to think that no living thing endowed with spirit existed upon the earth, when, by the aid of their microscope, they observed another object, about the size of the whale, floating on the waters of the Baltic. The fact was, a ship load of philosophers were returning from a grand intellectual and international congress, where they had distinguished themselves by making a great many observations, which neither they nor anyone else understood. The newspapers said their vessel ran aground in the Gulf of Bothina, and that passengers and crew were saved with great difficulty; but one seldom knows in this world the exact history of any transaction. I am going faithfully to recount what took place, without adding anything of my own, and that is no little privation to an historian. Micromega stretched out his hand towards the object, lifted up the vessel full of philosophers very tenderly with two fingers, and set it on his finger-nail for fear of squeezing it. "Ah," said the dwarf from Saturn, "here, now, we have an animal distinctly different from the former." The Sirian removed the animal in question to the hollow of his hand for safety. The passengers and people of the ship believing themselves lifted up by a hurricane and cast on a species of rock, instantly began to set themselves in commotion; the sailors took barrels of wine, cast them overboard upon the hand of Micromega, and then descended the ship's side. The geometricians took their quadrants, their sextants, and their theodolites, and came out upon the Sirian's fingers. The giant felt something tickle his finger; it was the iron-tipped staff of the theodolite, which they had driven a foot and more into his skin; a kind of bristle, Micromega judged, proceeding from the little animal in his hand, but did not suspect the truth. The microscope, which could hardly distinguish a whale from a passenger-ship, entirely failed to reveal a creature so imperceptible as man. Taking up a diamond of much greater magnifying power, imagine the Sirian's pleasure when he first saw these little insects move about upon his open palm. Trembling with delight, he placed a similiar lens in the hands of his fellow-traveller, and began to watch them with wonder and surprise. They questioned whether it were possible that these mites could have an equivalent to a soul. The Saturnian refused to believe it. He said that presupposed intelligence; that intelligent beings could communicate ideas, that he had not heard these beings speak; and therefore he supposed they did not speak. Besides, how could imperceptible beings have organs of speech, and what could they have to say? In order to talk it was needful to think, or something like it, but if they thought, they must have souls; to attribute souls to things so small was absurd.

"Let us examine these insects; we can reason about them afterwards," said Micromega. With that he drew out a pair of scissors, and cutting a piece of his thumb-nail, rolled it up into a kind of ear-trumpet like a vast funnel, and put the small end against his ear. The mouth of the speaking trumpet entirely enveloped the whole ship. The feeblest voice entering the funnel reverberated loudly against its circular sides, so that, at length, the philosopher above was able to hear a faint buzz proceeding from the insects beneath. After an hour's persevering application he could distinguish words. So could the dwarf, but less clearly. Their astonishment increased every moment. They heard the mites talk good sense. Marvellous freak of nature.

The Sirian took the dwarf upon his knee, and bending down his head to the little people in his hand, he spake thus in his softest whisper: "Oh, invisible insects, whom the hand of the Creator has been pleased to make so infinitely small, I thank Him for showing me a mystery I deemed inscrutable. It may be they would disdain to receive you at the court whence I was banished, but I despise nothing, and I offer you my protection."

If any people were ever astonished they were those to whom these words were addressed. They could not imagine whence the words came. The ship's chaplain began to pray, the sailors to swear, the philosophers to propound theories,

but neither plan proved effectual in revealing the source of the strange voice. Then the Saturnian dwarf, who had a much softer voice than Micromega, told, in a few words, who they were and whence they came, and after complaining of the exceeding smallness of his hearers, began to question them. Had they always lived in this wretched state, on the very borders of annihilation? What did they do in a globe apparently made expressly for whales? Were they happy? Did they marry and have families? And so on.

One geometrician of the company, more hardy than his fellows, and shocked to find anyone sceptical about the mental endowment of the race, took an observation of the speaker with his quadrant from three different points of view, and having done so, spoke thus: "And so you think because you happen to measure five thousand feet from your boots to your crown, that therefore ——."

"Five thousand feet!" cried the dwarf. "Good heavens, how did he know my height! Not an inch out. What! this atom measure me? This is geometry. He knows my height, whilst I, who am conscious of his existence only through an immensely powerful microscope, actually don't yet know his."

"Yes," said the geometrician, "I have measured you, and now I will measure your big companion." Micromega was obliged to lie down, for when he stood up his head was in the clouds. The mites quickly ascertained, by trigonometry, that they saw before them a young man of a hundred and twenty thousand feet high. "Oh, intelligent atom-," said Micromega, "in whom the Eternal shows forth His great power; pure, indeed, must be your joys, for since you possess so little matter and appear to be all soul, you must doubtless pass your whole time in thought and love, the true life of spirits."

A very frank philosopher replied, "That, with the exception of a mere few, and those few held of little account by the masses, all the rest of the world consisted of an assemblage of fools, malefactors, and idiots."

"We have more matter than is requisite to do a great deal of mischief," said he, "if one only has the will. At this present moment there are one hundred thousand fools of our species who wear helmets, engaged in killing or rather murdering thousand others who wear turbans. Almost all through the world the same thing is going on, and has been going on from time immemorial." The Sirian frowned and asked what could be the cause of such horrible quarrels among such pitiful little people.

"All about a bit of dirt no bigger than your finger-nail," answered the philosopher.

"Not one of these thousands of men who are cutting one another's throats," continued he, "cares one straw about the bit of ground he is fighting for. It is only whether it shall belong to one man whom they call Sultan, or to another they call (I can't tell why) Cæsar. Neither of these men has ever seen, or ever will see the bit of land the fighting is about, and scarcely one of those who are mutually cutting each other's throats on their behalf has ever seen either of the men for whom they get their throats cut."

"Wretches," cried Micromega indignantly, "it is hardly possible to imagine madness so furious and malicious. I should be doing a just action were I to go and crush out the whole ants nest of puny murderers with three steps of my foot."

"Do not give yourself the trouble," said the philosopher, "They annihilate themselves quite fast enough. Even when they do not draw the sword, famine, overwork, and intemperance carry them off quite as fast. It is not they who should be punished, but those sedentary savages who live in luxurious palaces, who during an after dinner lounge, will order the massacre of a million of their kind, and then be driven to church in state to give solemn thanks to heaven for it."

The traveller was moved with pity for the tiny race. Said he to the philosopher: "Since then, you belong to the small number of wise men who do not apparently earn your bread by killing each other, pray tell me how you occupy your time?" Answered one, "We dissect flies—we measure lines—we calculate figures. We are perfectly agreed upon two or three points which we understand, and we are eternally disputing about two or three thousand which we do not understand."

It seemed like some strange dream to the Sirian and the Saturnian to listen to the doings of these thinking insects.

"How far do you reckon it from Sirius to the star Castor?" asked Micromega.

They answered altogether, "Thirty-three-and-a-half degrees."

"And how far from here to the moon?"

"About thirty diameters of the earth, in round numbers."

"What is the weight of your atmosphere?"

Here he thought to puzzle the little people, but they answered, readily enough, it was about nine hundred times less than the weight of a like volume of water, and ninety thousand times less than that of standard gold. At this reply the Saturnian dwarf was so astonished that he was inclined to take for sorcerers the very beings to whom, not a quarter of an hour before, he had denied the possession of souls.

Micromega said, "Since you are so well acquainted with what is beyond you, doubtless you are no less well informed as to that which is within. Tell me what is your soul, and how you account for the formation of ideas?"

They began to speak altogether, as before, but this time no two of them were agreed. One quoted Aristotle, another Malebranche, that of Leibnitz, the other of Locke. Presently an old Descartian philosopher made himself heard above the rest. Said he, "The soul is an intelligence. The reason of its being is because it is. This is what Aristotle expressly states, page six hundred and thirty-three, Louvre edition." He quoted the passage.

"I don't understand Greek," said the giant.

"Nor I," answered the philosophic mite.

"Then, pray, why do you quote Greek?"

"Because," answered the philosopher, "nothing can be more appropriate than to speak of a subject of which one knows nothing in a language of which one understands still less."

Another philosopher said: The soul is a spirit which, previous to its birth, is acquainted with the whole system of metaphysics, but on being born is obliged to go to school to re-learn that which it once knew very well, but can never know any more."

"It profits nothing," said Micromega, "to have been so wise before birth, only to grow up into a man whose only sign of wisdom is his beard. But what do you mean by a spirit?"

"Why do you ask?" said the debatee. "How can anyone tell what spirit is? We only know it is not matter."

"But do you know what matter is?"

"Certainly. For instance, this stone is of a grey colour, it has a certain form, it has three dimensions, it is weighty and divisible."

"Very good," said the Sirian. "This object which you say appears to be divisible, weighty, and so on, will you tell me what it is? You are acquainted with some of its qualities, but the ground of the thing, the thing itself, do you know what that is?"

"No," said he.

"Then you do not even know what matt e is?"

Micromega, addressing himself to another sage, seated upon his thumb, asked what her thought his soul was, and what was its purpose?

"Nothing at all," said the disciple of Malebranche, "for God does all in me and for me, and through me. It is He does everything with which I am concerned."

"Scarce worth while, then, to be," observed the Sirian. "And you, my friend," turning to an exponent of Leibnitz, "what say you?"

"The soul," answered he, "is the hand that points the hours whilst my body strikes them; or, if you like, the soul strikes the hours which my body indicates; or better, my soul is the mirror of the universe, and my body is its frame. I hope I make myself sufficiently clear."

Then spake a disciple of Locke. "For my part I do not know how I think, but I know that I never derive impressions except through the medium of my senses. I do not dispute that there may be immaterial and intelligent substances, but it seems to me impossible for thought to be communicated to matter. I reverence the great Eternal Power. It is not for me to set bounds to it. I affirm nothing, but am content to believe there are many things possible to a supreme intelligence which it would be impossible to understand." The giant smiled, yet he thought this one not the least wise of all the philosophers. The dwarf would have embraced the speaker had not his extreme disproportion of size prevented such a cordial manifestation. Unfortunately, a little fellow, in a square cap, pushed himself forward and begged to dissent from the opinions expressed by the other animalculæ. He said he knew all about the soul,

and all about the universe. He said it was a source of unspeakable comfort to him to feel (and here looked the two celestial visitants deliberately up and down from top to toe) that their worlds, their suns, and stars, and mighty systems, had all been created expressly for the good of mankind!

At this the two travellers became convulsed with that inextinguishable laughter which, according to Homer, is an enjoyment belonging exclusively to the gods. They shook with it to that extent that the vessel tumbled off the Sirian's palm and fell into his pocket. The two good folks, after much groping about, found the ship, and replacing the little mites on board set it float again. In bidding them farewell, Micromega spoke very kindly, notwithstanding he was not a little vexed to find beings so infinitely little puffed up with conceit so infinitely great. He promised to write a book of philosophy for their instruction and guidance, assuring them they should therein see the sum of all philosophy and the substance of all wisdom.

In due course this volume found its way to Paris, to the Academy of Sciences, but when the good old secretary opened it he found nothing but a book completely blank!

Is Christianity a failure? No, but some Christians are failures. We might as well think that marriage is a failure because some married folks are unhappy.

The true Church is a sort of larger family, with a spiritual estate of ideas and truths and aims descending in an enlarging inheritance. How then could so many of our younger people have turned aside into scepticism, or have fallen back into the priestly puerilities which their ancestors discarded, but for neglect of proper nurture in the essentials of Christianity or distinct from "Churchianity." The great danger besetting the liberation of religious thought today is here. It is that Christian nurture will fail of due provision. It is that in this time of shifting views and decaying forms our children may miss early initiation into that true life of worship, which is the best security against either superstition or infidelity, anchored as it is to the essential simplicity of Christianity as a way of life, and that eternal.

Mr. Gladstone on "The Atonement."

Mr. Gladstone's article in the *Nineteenth Century*, on 'True and False Theories of the Atonement," will be read by many who do not usually interest themselves in theological questions. Mr. Gladstone's great name lends an attraction to any subject of which he treats. Certainly, it is a wonderful thing to see a man of the late Premier's age and position entering the field of theological controversy with all the ardour of a young curate. If Mr. Gladstone should continue on this line, theological discussion will become far more popular than it has been for many a long day, and his picturesque figure will invest it with a new fascination. We do not now propose to enter the lists with so keen and subtle a disputant. It is sufficient for our purpose to call attention to a couple of peculiarities in Mr. Gladstone's article. The first is the remarkable manner in which he gives himself away to Mrs. Besant. Mr. Gladstone's article is written *apropos* of a confession by Mrs. Besant that at an early age she was led to consider and reject (among other orthodox doctrines) the theory of Atonement, which represents God as "accepting a vicarious suffering from Christ and a vicarious righteousness from the sinner." Mr. Gladstone sarcastically remarks that this proposition, with others, was rejected by a girl in her teens! Yet the object of Mr. Gladstone's article is to show that this particular view of the Atonement, rejected by Mrs. Besant, is not the view of the orthodox churches, and is, in fact, "an utterly modern caricature of the true faith." Why, then, should Mrs. Besant be rebuked for renouncing such a doctrine, even in her teens? Instead of an event for sarcasm, most of us will think that Mrs. Besant early showed her good sense by a revolt against a theory, which Mr. Gladstone himself labours to prove is unworthy and inadequate.

A second peculiarity of Mr. Gladstone's article is the assumption that it expounds and defends the orthodox theory of the Atonement. The central idea of Mr. Gladstone's view of the Atonement is no more orthodox than is Dr. Martineau's. Not many years ago it was hotly denounced as heresy and there was a talk, both in Scotland and America, of bringing its prophets to trial. Known as the Ethical theory it was

set forth in this country by Macleod Campbell and in America by Dr. Bushnell. It is a view which regards the sufferings of Christ as an instrument for promoting righteousness, in the same way as the sufferings of good men often bring benefits to the bad, or as the sufferings of parents often touch and move the hearts of children in right directions. Thus stated we can all agree with it. It is true Mr. Gladstone arrives at it by paths we cannot take, and his acceptance of the ethical view of the Atonement is accompanied by rags and remnants of older and more questionable theories which we have discarded. Mr. Gladstone cannot rid himself of the old machinery of a Fall necessitating a stupendous and miraculous deliverance. He has no inkling of the fact that Evolution has quite destroyed the old idea of a once perfect and innocent condition from which man fell away into sin so that all his subsequent history has been that of Recovery and Restoration. There never was a past in which man was so good and so far on the road to the Ideal as to-day. The Fall as Mr. Gladstone conceives it called for a Supernatural Intervention to rectify a world gone out of gear. Here is the old creaking machinery which has ground out so much east wind for the churches. Yet Mr. Gladstone clearly sees and plainly states that the *essential* thing in the Atonement is its ethical influence—whereas orthodoxy declares that the essential thing is Substitution. But according to Mr. Gladstone Substitution is "an utterly modern caricature of the true faith" and he will have none of it. Alas! is not this flat heresy on Mr. Gladstone's part? Substitution is the doctrine of the Thirty-nine Articles; it is the doctrine of the Westminster confession: it is the doctrine of hundreds of popular hymns; it is the doctrines of the Evangelicals; it is the doctrine of Luther and of Anselm before him. All these orthodox authorities have nothing to say about the ethical value of the Atonement, which Mr. Gladstone would have us believe has always been the true faith of the Church. But in Mr. Gladstone's article and contention we see a conspicuous instance of that process by which the heresy of yesterday not only becomes the orthodoxy of to-day but is read back into all the past and declared to be the faith the church has always held!

Editorial Notes.

Some of our friends are in a state of considerable indignation by reason of the criticisms passed on our churches by Mrs. Humphrey Ward in her Essex Hall Lecture on "Unitarians and the Future." The fact is we are a little too sensitive to criticism, and, to use a vulgarism, just a little too *touchy*. We have been so long accustomed to think of ourselves as the cream of Dissent and the very pink of intelligent piety that it comes upon us with a shock to be told that our churches are lacking in beauty and enthusiasm, and that we, ourselves, live in a narrow world, knowing little of other forms of types of piety, and ignorant of the main religious traditions of our country. Still more does it anger us to be told, in effect, that about some cardinal matters of religious interest we don't know where we are. Here is a sentence which has gravelled not a few:—"Unitarianism in many of its phases looks too much like *the remains of something else:* it suffers from the indecision of much of its thought and teaching." Now if there is one thing Unitarians had prided themselves on it was the clearness, positiveness, and certainty of their Theological position. They had solved the problems of Christendom; there were no more mysterious spaces; they had labelled every superstition; they knew their own minds on every article of faith, and now they are told that their thought and teaching strikes a stranger as suffering from indecision. It is cruel!

Yet there are few things of more advantage than that we should, once in a while, see ourselves as others see us, and note the impression we leave upon a fresh and original mind when first brought into contact with our churches. We have our own stock ideas and estimates upon which it is surely good to have turned a fresh stream of thought from a keen and observant soul trained in quite another atmosphere. For Mrs. Ward, although numbered among us, is hardly of us. She breaks in upon us from another circle of traditions, and estimates our work and claims in other balances than those we have been accustomed to use. And if we knew how to appreciate it, there is uncommon benefit to be derived from the process.

In justice to Mrs. Ward it must be said she speaks in the most glowing and sympathetic terms of what Unitarianism has been and done in the last sixty years. Nothing could be finer than her testimony to Dr. Martineau, and it was a touch of genuine insight, not to say of genius, which led her to take Dr. Martineau's intellectual and spiritual history as a type of the development which has marked the Unitarianism of the long period covered by his life. It is a noble and worthy tribute which is paid to our great leader,—"The greatest religious name in England since Newman died," is Mrs. Ward's claim. It is a large and sympathetic appreciation enables Mrs. Ward to see that the development of Unitarian thought within the century is almost identical with the story of James Martineau's mental and religious growth. Mrs. Ward sums up that growth in one sentence—"The *free* development of the Christian spirit under the perpetual discipline of an expanding knowledge," or, with a different turn, "One Christian community which has learned to dissociate the life and faith from the permanence of creeds." The thought-history of the author of "A Study of Religion" is taken as broadly typical of the history of our churches.

The note of indecision Mrs. Ward finds among us has reference in the first place to the hesitating and wavering way in which so many of us speak of Jesus Christ. We are so afraid of seeming to give the slightest sanction to a popular but erroneous doctrine of his person that we refrain from giving him his due place as the noblest and most conspicuous symbol for the western world of "that divine life in our life which is the matter and ground of modern faith." It cannot be denied that much of the teaching of progressive thought in religious matters is to eliminate the name and influence of Jesus. To many eyes he seems to disappear amid the researches of historical criticism and the widening of the range of rationalism. But this is not necessary. On the contrary, the very result of the work of criticism on religion in many cases serves to invest the figure of Jesus with a new charm and persuasiveness. The tendency in our midst to avoid the special Christian tradition is one of the secrets of our weakness. A simple, human, natural Christ may inspire as dear a dicipleship as the old miraculous and supernatural Christ. The hesitancy to acknowledge his unique greatness for fear of being mistaken is a sign of weakness. Hence the note of indecision.

One of the most valuable points in Mrs. Ward's address, and one which seeks to correct a too common defect, is the emphasis she puts on the Church idea as expressed in public worship and Christian communion. We have laid such stress on the fact that forms, times, and observances are not necessary to religion; we have warned our people so constantly against supposing that there is any virtue in church-going, that at last the people have bettered our instruction and given up church-going altogether. We commend to preachers and people alike the wise and earnest words with which Mrs. Ward closes her address:—"The one irreparable loss for the Christian, of whatever way of thinking, is the loss of Christian fellowship. If he knew his own interests he would cling to it through many a difficulty that now disheartens him. In times of inevitable desolation he would bear loyally with many a service and preacher that would otherwise mean little to him, for the sake of still realising, however imperfectly, his membership of the common household. Still more, if he desires to strengthen in himself the spiritual life, will he walk and strive with those who are in truth his comrades—he will be eager to find them, to bear them witness, to work at the same problems. A very small suppression of idleness, of caprice, of timidity, in a certain number of men and women at the present moment would indefinitely strengthen the new Christian society it would put themselves in the way of salvation, and it would transform and re-vivify the small and struggling vanguard of a larger host which to-day calls itself by the honourable Unitarian name."

For our part we are thankful to Mrs. Ward for a criticism so large and kindly, at once so appreciative and suggestive. We advise our friends to read it carefully as an earnest effort to make our churches a little more alive to the work before them and to the necessities of an age which turns a search-light on every church and creed, asking what help and grace it has to offer.

THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

New and Old.

New little feet
  Patter on the floor,
New little faces
  Peep through the door,
New little souls
  Have entered into life,
New little voices
  Speak in love or strife,
New little fingers
  Tightly clasp our own,
New little tendrils
  Round our hearts grown.

Still the old voices
  Echo in our ear,
And the old faces
  Hallowed are and dear.
Still the old friends
  Who have passed away,
Live in our affection—
  Love has no decay ;
And the old words,
  Spoken long ago,
Keep the heart tender,
  Make the tears flow.

Thus new and old
  Mingle in one :
Each has its blessing ;
  And when life is done,
Old faces, old friends,
  Will meet us again.
Treasures long buried
  We shall regain ;
All that is lovely,
  All that is true,
Will live on for ever,
  The old and the new.

The Linnet Choir.

A linnet choir sang in a chestnut crown,—
  A hundred, p'r'aps, or more,—
Till the stream of their song ran warbling down
  And entered a cottage door ;
And this was the burden of their lay,
  As they piped in the yellow tree :—
"I love my sweet little lady-bird,
  And I know that she loves me :
'Chip, chip, cherry chip, cherry, cherry, cherry chip !'
We linnets are a merry band,
  A happy company."

It chanced a poet passed that way,
  With a quick and merry thought,
And, listening to the roundelay,
  His ear their language caught ;
Quoth he, as he heard the minstrels sing,
  "What heavenly harmony !
I shall steal that song, and carry it home
  To my dear family—
'Chip, chip, cherry chip, cherry, cherry, cherry chip !'"
And that song they sing now every eve,
  His children, wife, and he.

Next came a boy, with a curly head,
  And laughter-lighted eye,
"I've a cage at home, sweet birds," he said,
  "And I'll catch you by and by ;
My sister would feed and love you well,
  My mother would happier be ;
Come, tell me," he said, "my little birds,
  Shall I take you home with me,
'Chip, chip, cherry chip, cherry, cherry, cherry chip !'"
And all that night the little boy dreamt
  He heard the birds in the tree.

EDWARD CAPERN.

Answer to August Puzzles.

[Owing to the Editor's absence from home on his holidays it was impossible to give the answers to the "Wild Flower Puzzles" in September.] Next month we shall give our little readers quite a different sort of puzzle.

1.—A DAISY.

A rnold D
D aine O
A die U
I ttidna B
S choo L
Y anke E

Answered right by Janet Marsh, George Thompson, and Dorothy Madders.

2.—A LILY.

A ndrew W
L ava A
I nsul T
L ov E
Y ea R

Answered right by Janet Marsh, Nellie Eyre, and Dorothy Madders.

3.—BLUE BELL.

B ar B
L an E
U ntil L
E e L

Answered by Vincent Cliff, Janet Marsh, J. K. Smith, and Dorothy Madders.

News from the Field.

BANBURY.—*Christ Church Unitarian Chapel.*—On Sunday, September 16th, 1894, a Harvest Festival was held. The Chapel was decorated for the occasion in a tasteful manner. The pulpit was very pretty, being adorned with dahlias, stocks of wheat and oats, and so forth. The gas brackets and chandeliers were also adorned with profusion. There was a large attendance at the evening service, which commenced with the singing of an anthem, immediately succeeded by "Come ye thankful people, come." Following this was a Litany with choral responses, and then the choir very prettily sang a piece of music entitled "The Reapers," the congregation remaining seated whilst they did so. In their rendition of "The Reapers" the children in the choir showed that they had been very carefully trained. In succession to this came a reading by the pastor, of texts especially appropriate to the occasion, taken from all parts of the Bible, interspersed with sermonettes. When he had concluded the choir sang, "Happy, happy, Sunday bells," a sweet melody which, well as they gave it, sounded particularly pretty, great attention having been paid to modulation of tone. A continuation of the Litany with choral responses formed the next portion of the service; and when the congregation had risen from their knees the choir sang "What shall the harvest be?" the solo being taken by a young lady. The hymn, "Hark my soul how everything," sung by the congregation, was succeeded by the address, which was founded upon the 11th Verse of the 65th Psalm: "Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness, and Thy clouds drop fatness. It was a typical harvest thanksgiving sermon. Another piece of music by the choir, which followed the address, was entitled "Harvest Home." The collection came after this, and while it was being made Mr. F. T. C. Webb gave selections on the organ. Finally came the hymn "O Lord of Heaven and earth and sea," which, followed by the benediction, completed the service. The text at the afternoon service was Ecclesiastes iii, 11, "He hath made everything beautiful in his own time." Mr. Freeman and Mr. Meddows very kindly assisted the choir at both the services. The young lady who took the solo mentioned above was Miss Mary Bonham. The ladies who assisted in the decorations were Mrs. Hill, Mrs. Davis, Mrs. Lines, Mrs. Miles, Mrs. George Fletcher, and they were helped by several gentlemen. On Monday evening there was a sale of the fruit and vegetables, the proceeds being devoted to the chapel fund.

BIRMINGHAM.—*The Old Meeting Church.*—In celebration of the completion of the Rev. Joseph Wood's tenth year of ministry, a congregational meeting was held on Friday, September 21, at the Schools, Bristol Street, when Mr. Wood was presented with an address of congratulation and of thanks. The chair was occupied by Mr. H. T. Forrester, the senior warden, and he was supported by Mr. Charles Harding (warden), Mr. Allen Edwards (treasurer), Lieutenant-General Phelps, and Messrs. R. Payton, E. L. Tyndall, A. Scruton, and E. Townley. The address, which was tastefully illuminated, recorded Mr. Wood's acceptance of the ministry of the Old Meeting Church ten years ago, during the removal of the church from the old building in Old Meeting Street to the existing edifice, and sketched the growth of the present church and its institutions. Expressing the congregation's gratitude to Mr. Wood for his untiring energy in all that concerned the welfare of the Old Meeting, it bore testimony to the success of his work, to the development of the sphere of the church's usefulness, and to the marked increase in the Congregational body.—In presenting the address, the Chairman recalled the difficulties which had surrounded the beginning of Mr. Wood's ministry, and thanked him for the ardour with which he carried on his work.—Mr. Wood, replying, said that his gratitude was due to the church for supporting him so thoroughly as it had done in every movement he had undertaken. He expressed the conviction that in its work during the past ten years the Old Meeting had justified whatever efforts in new directions it had made, and had shown that it possessed a deep and strong vitality, which had, and was still, steadily increasing. Having stated the satisfaction which he felt at the changes which had taken place in the church services, Mr Wood quoted the opinion of a distinguished member of the Church of England that the Church of the future would be a Church which combined the widest and freest rationalism in the pulpit with a reverent and beautiful ritual. If the churches of Birmingham were to hold their own and maintain their hold on the town, they must provide attractive services, with preaching abreast of the knowledge and ideas of the day.—During the evening selections of music were rendered by several members of the congregation.

CRADLEY.—The Rev. E. P. Hall, late of Trowbridge, has accepted a twelve months' engagement at this church.

KINGSWOOD, HOLLYWOOD.—The last botanical ramble for the season from Kingswood School, was much enjoyed, the place explored being Gay Hill. Returning to the school the members had tea, and then listened attentively to an excellent paper by Mr. W. Wilson, on "The materials of which leaves, etc., are made up." The paper being illustrated on the blackboard was most interesting. After an animated discussion, a vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Wilson.

LYE.—*School Extension Fund, &c.* Amount acknowledged as received or promised a month ago, £123 8s. Later subscriptions:—Miss C. Harrold, Birmingham, £5; Miss Preston, London, £3 3s.; Miss J. D. Smith, London, £2 2s.; Miss Swanwick, London, £2 2s.; Miss E. Lee, Birmingham, £1 1s.; Mrs. Webb, London, £1 1s.; Mrs. Temple, London, £1 1s.; Mr. W. T. Marriott, Wakefield, £1; Miss J. W. Lloyd, Birmingham, 10s.; Mrs. Arthur Ryland, Bromsgrove, 10s.; Mr. F. L. Beeton, Lye, 5s.; Miss Gargory, Birmingham, 5s.; Miss E. Gargory, Birmingham, 5s.; Mr. J. D. Skirrow, 5s.; Mr. T. Taylor, Birmingham, 5s.; T. P. Y., London, 5s. Total subscribed, £142 7s.

Midland Church Calendar for October.

ALCESTER: The Old Meeting House.
Minister: Rev. John Dale, Salford House. Service at 6 p.m.

ATHERSTONE: Unitarian Chapel.
Minister: Rev. J. Howard, of Tamworth. Service at 3 p.m.

BIRMINGHAM: Church of the Messiah, Broad Street.
Minister: Rev. L. P. Jacks, M.A.
Services: 11 and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM: The Hurst Street Mission.
Minister: Rev. W. J. Clarke, 160, Pershore Road. Services: 10-15, 2-45, and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM: The Fazeley Street Mission.
Minister: Rev. T. Pipe, 59, Great Brook Street. Services: 11 and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM: The Newhall Hill Church.
Minister: Rev. A. A. Charlesworth, Reservoir Road, Edgbaston. Services: 11 and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM: The Old Meeting Church.
Minister: Rev. Joseph Wood, 120, Gough Road, Edgbaston. Services: 11 and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM: The Church of the Saviour.
Minister: Rev. J. C. Street, Bristol Road, Edgbaston. Services: 1 and 6-30.

BIRMINGHAM: Small Heath, Little Green Lane Board School.
Minister: Rev. Edward J. Sale, 70, Whitmore Road, Small Heath. Service at 6-30 p.m.

BANBURY: Christchurch Chapel, Horse Fair.
Minister: Rev. H. Hill, 5, Crouch Street. Service: Evening, 6-30.

COSELEY: The Old Meeting House.
Minister: Rev. Henry Eachus. Services: 11 and 6-30.

CRADLEY: Netherend Chapel.
Minister: Rev. E. P. Hall. Services 11 and 6-30.

DUDLEY: The Old Meeting House.
Minister: Rev. A. H. Shelley. Services: 11 and 6-30.

EVESHAM: Oat Street Meeting House.
Minister: Rev. Rudolf Davis. Services: 11 and 6-30.

KIDDERMINSTER:
Minister: Rev. E. D. Priestley Evans. Services: 10-30 and 6-30.

KINGSWOOD: Kingswood Chapel, Hollywood.
Minister: Rev. J. Hardinge Matthews. Services: 11 and 6-30.

LOUGHBOROUGH: Unitarian Chapel.
Minister: Rev. H. Haycock, Beacon Road. Services: 10-45 and 6-30.

OLDBURY: Unitarian Meeting House.
Minister: Rev. Henry McKean, The Dingle, Oldbury. Services: 11 and 6-30.

SHREWSBURY: High Street Church.
Minister: Rev. E. Myers, F.G.S., Claremont Hill. Services: 11 and 6-30.

STOURBRIDGE: Presbyterian Chapel.
Minister: Rev. A. W. Timmis. Services: 11 and 6-30. Annual Sermons on August 12th, at 3-30 o'clock by Rev. C. C. Coe.

TAMWORTH: Cole Hill Chapel.
Minister: Rev. J. Howard, 17, Aldergate. Services: 11 and 6-30.

THE LYE: Unitarian Chapel.
Minister: Rev. I. Wrigley, B.A. Service: 6-30.

WALSALL. Unitarian Free Church.
Minister: Rev. Peter Dean, 3, Sandwell Street. Services: 11-15 and 6-30.

WEST BROMWICH: Lodge Road Chapel.
Minister: Rev. John Harrison Jesson Street. Services: 11 and 6-30.

WHITCHURCH: Church of the Saviour.
Minister: Rev. George Eyre Evans, Doddington Parsonage. Services: 11, 2-15 for Children, 6-30

WOLVERHAMPTON: Unity Church, Snow Hill.
Minister: Rev. L. G. Harris Crook, Oaklands Road. Services: 11 and 6-30.